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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: VIEWS OF DC PARTY SECRETARY FANFANI ON DOMESTIC
POLITICAL SITUATION

1. I HAD LUNCHEON MARCH 28 WITH DC PARTY SECRETARY FANFANI
TO SEEK HIS IMPRESSIONS ON THE PRESENT COURSE OF ITALIAN POLITICS.
I HAVE KNOWN FANFANI FOR 20 YEARS AND SINCE MY ARRIVAL LAST YEAR
HAVE KEPT IN REGULAR CONTACT WITH HIM. OUR RELATIONSHIP IS FRANK
AND FRIENDLY AND, AS FANFANI CURRENTLY IS THE SINGLE MOST POWERFUL
AND DYNAMIC ACTOR ON THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SCENE, I AM REPORTING
HIS VIEWS IN SOME DETAIL.

2. FANFANI EMPHASIZED HIS BELIEF THAT IT IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL
THAT HIS OWN PARTY BE UNITED. HOWEVER, THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT
THE PARTY SHOULD NOT HAVE ROOM IN IT FOR A WIDE SPECTRUM OF
POLITICAL VIEWS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT. IN FACT, FANFANI SAID, HE HAS
A HARD JOB EXPLAINING TO SOME OF THE MEMBERS OF HIS PARTY THAT
THE DC MUST BE BROADLY REPRESENTATIVE IN ORDER TO ATTRACT THE
LARGEST POSSIBLE NUMBER OF VOTERS.

3. FANFANI SAID THAT THE DC HAS DIFFICULTY DEALING WITH THE
ITALIAN SOCIALIST PARTY (PSI). THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, HOWEVER,
HAVE BEEN MUCH EASIER TO GET ALONG WITH, EXCEPT FOR CERTAIN
PROBLEMS WITH SARAGAT. (NOTE: FANFANI NO DOUBT HAD IN MIND MORN-
ING PRESS REPORTS OF UNCOMPLIMENTARY REMARKS BY SARAGAT REFERRING
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TO HIM AS A GENTLEMAN IN PRIVATE LIFE BUT A POLITICAL "GUAIO"

(MISFORTUNE.) FANFANI EXPRESSED RESPECT FOR PSI SECRETARY DE MARTINO, BUT SAID THAT HE LACKED DYNAMISM AND, FOR EXAMPLE, SEEMED TO FORGET ENTIRELY ABOUT POLITICS FROM FRIDAY TO TUESDAY WHEN HE WENT HOME NAPLES FOR THE WEEKEND.

4. I ASKED FANFANI FOR HIS VIEWS ON HOW THE STABILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT COULD BE INCREASED. HE ANSWERED THAT ONE WAY TO ACHIEVE THIS WOULD BE FOR THE CENTER-LEFT PARTIES TO AGREE TO WORK TOGETHER OVER THE LONG TERM, AND THEN, AT THE TIME OF GENERAL ELECTIONS, EMPHASIZE THIS INTENTION TO THE VOTERS AND PLEDGE THAT THEY WOULD COOPERATE OVER THE FULL FIVE YEAR LEGISLATIVE MANDATE. THIS WOULD WOULD ALLOW A CHANGE OR TWO IN MINISTERS BUT THE SAME GOVERNMENT WOULD CARRY ON FOR A LONG ENOUGH PERIOD TO GET PROGRAMS ESTABLISHED AND REFORMS UNDERWAY AND REALLY DO THE JOB THAT NEEDS TO BE DONE.

5. I THEN WENT ON TO ASK WHAT FANFANI'S SHORT RANGE VIEW IS OF THE NEW RUMOR GOVERNMENT. HE INDICATED THAT HE FEELS THAT THE ADDITION OF ANDREOTTI, OF WHOM HE SPOKE HIGHLY, BRINGS TO THE GOVERNMENT SOMEBODY FROM THE CENTER OR RIGHT OF CENTER, A STRONG EFFECTIVE LEADER WHO KNOWS THE DEFENSE MINISTRY VERY WELL. THE ADDITION OF ANDREOTTI AND PSI LEFT LEADER MANCINI SHOULD BRING ABOUT A BROADER CONSENSUS AND A BROADER MANDATE FOR THE PRESENT COALITION THAN WAS POSSIBLE UNDER THE PREVIOUS RUMOR GOVERNMENT.

6. FANFANI EMPHASIZED TO ME THE DANGER WHICH HE FEELS THE DIVORCE REFERENDUM POSES TO CENTER-LEFT COOPERATION. FANFANI SAID THAT THIS DANGER WOULD BE INCREASED GREATLY IF ONE OR THE OTHER SIDE SHOULD WIN BY A SUBSTANTIAL MAJORITY. HOWEVER, HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THAT WILL HAPPEN. RATHER, HE EXPECTS THAT THE REFERENDUM WILL BE WON OR LOST BY A VERY SMALL MARGIN. IN THIS EVENT, HE DOES NOT SEE ANY DANGER TO THE PRESENT CENTER-LEFT GOVERNMENT. HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH WILL GET HEAVILY AND OPENLY INVOLVED IN THE REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN BECAUSE HE FEELS THAT THEY RECOGNIZE THAT THIS PROBABLY WOULD HURT MORE THAN IT MIGHT HELP.

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7. WE THEN TALKED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF EARLY ELECTIONS, HOW AND WHEN THEY MIGHT COME ABOUT BEFORE THE END OF THE PRESENT PARLIAMENTARY PERIOD. FANFANI DID NOT SEE POLITICAL ELECTIONS IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE, BUT DID NOT EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF EARLY ELECTIONS BEFORE THE 1977 EXPIRATION OF THE PRESENT LEGISLATURE. HE FELT THAT UNLESS THERE IS A LARGE MARGIN FOR THE WINNING SIDE IN THE REFERENDUM, NEAR TERM ELECTIONS ARE UNLIKELY.

8. FANFANI THEN TURNED TO PCI-DC RELATIONS. HE EXCLUDED THE IDEA THAT THE DC COULD ACCEPT THE PCI HISTORIC COMPROMISE OFFER. THE DIVORCE REFERENDUM ITSELF RULES THIS OUT. FANFANI DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE COMMUNISTS INTRANSIGENT OPPOSITION WILL AMOUNT TO MUCH OR THAT IT IS GOING TO AFFECT THE ABILITY OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT TO GOVERN. HE BELIEVES THAT THE REAL ANSWER TO THE PCI IS FOR THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT TO DO A GOOD JOB, PARTICULARLY IN HOLDING DOWN INFLATION AND GETTING THE ECONOMY REALLY MOVING. IN THAT EVENT, FANFANI SAID, THE PCI WILL NOT BE ABLE TO GIVE THEM TOO MUCH DIFFICULTY.

9. FANFANI EMPHASIZED HIS INTEREST IN BRINGING YOUNG PEOPLE UP THE ORGANIZATIONAL LADDER IN THE DC. I STRONGLY ENCOURAGED HIM IN THIS IDEA. FANFANI SAID THAT HE HOPED TO DEVOTE MORE TIME AFTER THE REFERENDUM TO STRENGTHENING THE DCM OYUGH AND WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS.

10. COMMENT: FANFANI'S REMARKS ON MEANS TO STRENGTHEN GOVERNMENT STABILITY AND LOGENVITY WERE OF PARTICULAR INTEREST GIVEN CURRENT SPECULATION REGARDING HIS INTENTIONS IN THIS AREA. HIS PROPOSAL FOR A ELECTORAL PLEDGE BY THE CENTER-LEFT PARITES TO COOPERATE AND TO SUPPORT A GOVERNMENT FOR ITS FULL LEGISLATIVE TERM SUGGESTS THAT HE IS THINKING, AT LEAST OUT LOUD, OF SOLUTIONS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CENTER-LEFT FORMULA. VOLPE

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